OCTOBER 10, 2025 LIPMANFAMILYFARMS.COM

ON THE HORIZON

Reliable & Consistent

Bringing you your weekly industry updates

CROP & MARKET

INDUSTRY INFO

LIPMAN family farms

MARKET UPDATES

ROUND TOMATOES

Slicer tomato production is currently active across multiple regions, including Tennessee, Virginia, and North Florida. Virginia's season is expected to wrap up over the next 10 to 14 days, with Tennessee likely following soon after. As these northern regions wind down, Florida will become the primary source of tomato production for the fall and winter months. Lipman's Ruskin/Palmetto crops are projected to begin around October 20th and ramp up to seasonal volumes by November. Quality has been solid across most growing areas, though some Virginia fruit has shown minor grading issues this week, including shape and catface concerns. Out West, mature green tomato supplies remain steady in California, while Baja and Central Mexico are experiencing lighter vine-ripe volumes as they transition into new fall plantings. California's quality continues to be strong, with growers selectively harvesting only the best fruit to align with lighter market demand. Some California farms may finish early, but most will conclude harvesting by the end of October. In Mexico, supply is expected to improve around October 20th, provided this weekend's forecasted weather event does not significantly affect crops or harvest schedules.

GRAPE TOMATOES

Lipman has finished grape tomato harvests in Virginia and begun light harvesting in the Ruskin/Palmetto growing region of Florida. Overall supply remains strong, with fruit available from multiple growing areas. As northern regions begin to wind down over the next several weeks, Florida will take over as the primary source of Eastern grape tomato supply through the winter and into spring. In the West, moderate volumes continue to come from Baja and Central Mexico, where quality has been reported as good. These regions are expected to sustain consistent supply until Sinaloa begins production in mid- to late December.

ROMA TOMATOES

Roma supplies remain steady across the Eastern growing regions, with product available from multiple production areas. Over the next few weeks, volumes are expected to gradually lighten as northern regions begin to wind down their seasons. Lipman's Tennessee farms are experiencing cooler fall temperatures, which are stretching outharvests for the remaining two to three weeks of the season. In Florida, the Quincy area began light acreage this week, and the first Lipman roma tomatoes from the Palmetto/Ruskin region are anticipated around October 20th. Seasonal volumes from this area are expected to build and be available by November. Out West, roma production remains moderate in Mexico and steady in California. Lipman's California harvests are projected to finish within the next 10 days, with fruit expected to remain available for approximately one additional week. Sizing has been consistent, with mostly extra-large fruit, and quality continues to be good. In Mexico, Baja volumes are lighter as growers transition between summer and fall plantings; new blocks are set to begin around October 20th, which should help boost supply. Central Mexico is expected to maintain steady production through the month, weather permitting. Quality has been mixed in both Baja and Central Mexico, though good fruit is still available. A significant rain event is forecast for much of Mexico over the weekend, which may affect production and quality for the short term.

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE

GREEN BELL PEPPERS

Bell pepper supplies are strong across the East, with availability stretching from Michigan down through Georgia and several growing regions in between. Southern fields are seeing volumes increase, and fruit sizing and color are expected to continue improving in the coming days. With most areas now harvesting from newer fields, overall quality has been very good and consistency remains high. In the West, steady supply continues out of the Fresno/ Oxnard region. The California desert is expected to begin harvest within the next week, marking the next phase of the seasonal transition. With support from Central Mexico, the desert region will serve as the primary supply source until Sonora/ Obregón begins production in late October to early November.

CUCUMBERS

Cucumber supplies remain abundant in the East, with active production in Michigan, New York, North Carolina, and Georgia. Cooler weather will bring an end to the Michigan and New York seasons soon, but Lipman's eastern North Carolina program is expected to continue through the end of the month. Georgia is now in full production with strong volumes and good quality. South Florida is set to begin harvest shortly after October 20th, with consistent supply through the transition period. In the West, supplies are also steady with production ongoing in Baja, Central Mexico, and Sonora. The highest quality fruit is currently coming from Baja, showing excellent color and firmness. Sonora's crop is still producing lighter-colored fruit early in the season, but quality and appearance are expected to improve as harvests progress in the coming weeks.

HARD SQUASH

Hard squash supplies are steady this week, with acorn, butternut, and spaghetti varieties available out of Kentucky, Michigan, New York, and Maine in the East. Some programs will wrap up ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday, but a few later-starting crops should provide solid coverage for holiday demand. Overall, quality has been reported as good across all varieties. In the West, supplies are currently coming from Stockton, California, and Washington state, where both volume and quality have remained consistent. These regions are expected to carry the market until Mexico's season begins in mid-November.

MINI SWEET PEPPERS

Mini sweet peppers are in good supply this week, with active production in Baja, Washington and Central Mexico. Washington will continue the season for a few more weeks, weather willing, before leaving mini sweet supply to Mexico. Quality has been reported as strong out of Washington and Baja, with consistent sizing and appearance.

WATERMELON

Lipman's South Carolina watermelon crops are into good volumes and we expect that to continue for the next few weeks. Quality has been solid and sizing is predominantly in the 45 ct range. South Carolina should continue through most, if not all, of October, providing a smooth transition into the Florida season beginning in November.

CHILI PEPPERS

Chili pepper production continues across several regions, though northern growing areas are approaching the end of their seasons. New Jersey, Michigan, and North Carolina still have limited availability but are expected to wind down soon. In the Southeast, Georgia has begun light harvesting of jalapeños and poblanos, with full chili pepper production anticipated within the next one to two weeks. Out West, California, Baja, and Central Mexico remain active in production. Moderate to good volumes are available on poblanos and tomatillos, while supply on other chili varieties is somewhat lighter. Tomatillo quality has recently improved following a challenging period, as farms transition into new blocks with fresher plants. Our Washington state partner is also in production for a few more weeks and has nice quality on most varieties. Overall quality across regions is good, and steady supply is expected unless weather becomes a factor.

MINI CUCUMBERS

Mini cucumber volumes are trending lighter as we work through the seasonal transition out of Canada. Western Canada will be wrapping up over the next few weeks, while Baja and Central Mexico expect harvests to strengthen by mid-to-late October, bringing consistent availability from the south. Overall quality has continued to be solid despite the seasonal shift.

TOMATO ON THE VINE (TOVs)

Canada's tomato-on-the-vine production remains at light to moderate levels, while Mexico's volumes are becoming more consistent as new crops come online for the season. Supplies are currently in transition, but overall quality and sizing have been consistent, with no major concerns reported. Availability is expected to improve in the weeks ahead as Mexico's production continues to ramp up.

STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING PRODUCE CONSUMPTION FREQUENCY

THEPRODUCENEWS.COM

OCTOBER 8, 2025

Adages like “an apple a day keeps the doctor away” and “eat your greens” may be old, but the overriding message is still important today, especially as only about a third of consumers consume fresh produce on a daily basis. That statistic, plus other findings reveal notable gaps in the intake of fruits and vegetables. While 34 percent of people enjoy produce once a day, 23 percent eat these products four or five times a week and 28 percent consume them one to three days a week. Approximately 10 percent report that their produce-eating occasions fall less than one day a week and 5 percent say they never opt for such foods. These figures point to ample opportunities — and one might say the need — for bolstering the consumption of nutrient-rich fruits and vegetables. Fortunately, suppliers and their retail partners can narrow gaps in a variety of ways.

For example, thanks to improved agricultural practices, broader global trade and transportation efficiencies, consumers have more options in the fresh produce department than they did in the past. Many of us remember when fresh produce had its moment in the spring and summer — the only times that certain offerings were available. Growers and grocers can lean into this year-round or multi-season availability. They can leverage shoppers’ fondness for more widely available favorites through in-store signage, digital promotions and websites. Messages can be fun, too, touting things like “Blueberries in Blizzard Weather” or “Squash in Summertime.”

Another way to move the needle on consumption and, ideally, sales, is to highlight special occasions. We’re in the thick of it now, with the onset of major holidays extending from Halloween through New Year’s Day, but there are many other micro-occasions for which produce can be added to the shopping list. Here, too, in-store and digital promotions can spread the message, providing ideas for usage and recipes.

More people are including fresh fruit and vegetables in all meal occasions, from breakfast through evening snacks. Dessert and evening snacks, in fact, remain the biggest growth opportunities for fruit. Vegetables are gaining in popularity for mid-morning and evening munchies.

Even as value has remained a purchase driver over the past few years, small investments in health, like the purchase of more fruits or vegetables, are understood to be beneficial. Stress that wherever you can in your marketing and merchandising efforts, because these items offer a unique proposition. Ultimately, daily consumption of fruits and vegetables is a goal recommended by health professionals and is also a goal for those who sell such products. There are more options and opportunities to do that now, and with a collective effort, the statistics for 2026, 2027 and beyond can certainly edge higher.

READ MORE HERE

CASUAL DINING'S RECENT OUTPERFORMANCE DRIVEN BY DEMOGRAPHICS

NRN.COM

OCTOBER 7, 2025

It has been well documented here and elsewhere that restaurant traffic has been relentlessly negative for quite some time now. We've heard several big chains share that lower-income consumers specifically are "sitting on the sidelines." Simultaneously, we've watched inflation and unemployment tick back up, while consumer sentiment has continued to trend downward. And, we know consumers are seeking deals at a historic level. To put a finer point on it — the environment is a bit grim, or dampened.

Of course, nothing is black and white, and this environment isn't affecting everyone equally. Based on conversations with restaurant management teams, unemployment data, and consumer confidence metrics, it is increasingly clear there are pockets of the consumer that are under more pressure versus the average consumer. There are four pockets of consumers that are especially feeling a pinch. They include:

- Younger consumers (18-34), who make up about 40% of all restaurant guests
- Democratic party/liberal consumers, who make up about 35% of restaurant guests
- Low-income consumers, who are about 31% of all restaurant guests
- Hispanic consumers, who are about 20% of restaurant guests

he fast-casual segment remains positioned favorably for long-term growth because of better unit economics, strong digital infrastructures, and strong value propositions. On a scale of 1 to 27, casual-dining restaurants scored a favorable 25 for brand exposure to the pockets of consumers that are currently struggling the most.

If there are pros and cons to pull from this analysis, the pros are that the industry's slowdown is largely cyclical rather than issues of restaurant oversupply or increased usage of GLP-1 weight loss drugs. On the "con" side, restaurant pressures are likely to continue through the first quarter of 2026 based on "a tightening employment backdrop."

READ MORE HERE

UPCOMING EVENTS:

OCT 16 - 18
IFPA GLOBAL PRODUCE AND FLORAL SHOW
COME SEE US AT BOOTH 2861!!
ANAHEIM CONVENTION CENTER
ANAHEIM, CA
https://www.freshproduce.com/events/the-global-produce-and-floral-show/

DEC 2 - 4
THE NEW YORK PRODUCE SHOW AND CONFERENCE
JAVITZ CONVENTION CENTER
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
https://www.nyproduceshow.com/

TOMATO SNAPSHOT

NEW MONTH, NEW FLAVORS, SAME FRESH COMMITMENT. 🍂 FROM HEARTY HARVESTS TO COOL WEATHER COOKING, FALL IS A TIME TO SAVOR. HERE'S WHAT'S LOOKING FRESH THIS OCTOBER!